



Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification 2019

Emergency Medical Services Authority
California Health and Human Services Agency

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In accordance with Health and Safety Code (H&SC) Section 1797.229, the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) collected 2019 data for all Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) initial certification processing. Data on 9,062 EMT applicants was submitted to EMSA by 65 certifying entities. Of those, 9,026 applicants were approved, 17 applicants were denied and 19 applicants either withdrew their applications or were rejected due to incomplete applications. The common reason listed for applicants with criminal history to withdraw their application was “withdrawn in lieu of denial.”

After reviewing the data, EMSA did not readily find evidence that prior criminal history is a frequent obstacle to certification as an EMT in the state of California. Analysis of the data shows that five percent (5%) of all applicants were found to have criminal history on their background check and the majority of those applicants (80%) were approved without restrictions. Less than 1% of all applicants are denied EMT certification due to criminal history. The low number of EMTs denied with criminal backgrounds compared to those approved or approved with restrictions does not suggest that criminal history is an absolute barrier to certification. EMSA was not able to correlate gender, age, or ethnicity to denial or approval of EMT applications.

Certifying entities who oversee the certification of EMTs and AEMTs were tasked with providing data on initial applications including criminal histories, denials, and approvals. Four hundred and thirty-three (433) applicants were found to have criminal history in their background, which represents five percent (5%) of all applicants. The majority of those (347) were approved without restrictions, while 17 were denied. Additionally, 19 withdrew their applications before a decision was made or did not complete the application process and 56 were approved with restrictions. Typical restrictions for EMT applicants is probation for one to three years.

BACKGROUND:

[Health and Safety Code Section 1797.229](#) requires that each local EMS Agency (LEMSA) and other certifying entities (CE) annually submit to the authority data on approvals or denials of EMT I (EMT Basic) or EMT-II (Advanced EMT). Health and Safety Code Section 1797.229 was enacted in 2018 and became effective January 1, 2019. Reporting by all agencies for the calendar year 2019 was due to EMSA by July 1, 2020. Reporting continues annually through July 1, 2024.

SCOPE & METHODOLOGY:

EMSA provided a reporting tool for all agencies to utilize in tracking the required data monthly that could then be submitted annually to EMSA. The reporting tool EMSA provided interlinked via excel all the data points so that final analysis could be conducted, correlations between the denial rates and the demographic data could be considered.

Six of the reporting agencies elected to use their own report in lieu of using the reporting tool provided by EMSA. The reports from these agencies were limited to aggregate totals, which did not permit any further breakdown and analysis. EMSA's ability to analyze the age, gender and ethnicity reflects the limits of these undifferentiated data reports. The specific demographic data of approvals and denials could not be determined. Additionally, two agencies chose not to collect or provide demographic data. This is reflected in subsequent appendixes in this report under the categories "Data Not Provided (by Agency)".

Of the 68 agencies required to provide annual reporting, EMSA found that 55 reports were complete, ten provided reports that were missing varying data points, and three agencies did not report anything. All data received was compiled and analyzed by EMSA and included in this report.

ANALYSIS:

EMSA reviewed the submitted data to determine if criminal background, age, gender or ethnicity may be a significant obstacle toward EMT or AEMT certification. EMSA further reviewed the data to determine if criminal backgrounds were a substantial barrier to certification. An analysis of all criminal history data received shows that while the number of applicants who have a criminal backgrounds was small (433), this background did not pose a significant barrier to certification, with less than one percent (1%) of the applicants being denied. EMSA reviewed the data on applicants with criminal history and determined the following:

- 433 (5%) were found to have criminal history in their background check.
- 347 applicants with criminal history were approved without restrictions.
- 17 applicants with criminal history were denied.
- 14 applicants with criminal history withdrew or had incomplete applications.
- 56 applicants with criminal history were approved with restrictions.
- One applicant without criminal history was denied due to fraud in the procurement of a license and five applicants with no criminal history withdrew or had incomplete applications.
- Less than one percent of the overall EMT applicants (9,062) were denied due to criminal history.

Of the applicants reported to have criminal history, only 28 included additional reasons for the decisions made. Based on the information provided, EMSA was not able identify any trends guiding the decisions.

- Twelve provided additional information on the conviction, but not the reason for the final decision,
- Four reported basing the decision recommended [Guidelines for Disciplinary Orders](#); which are based on statutory requirements,
- Four were denied for lack of response to the statement of issues and investigation requirements,
- Seven reported the applicant withdrew in lieu of denial or prior to investigation being completed,
- One withdrew because it was already certified by another Certifying Entity.

Of the data submitted in a format that allowed stratification, EMSA did not find that gender was a significant factor in denials. EMSA was only able to review the data of 59 certifying entities' submissions for this analysis as the other data sets were submitted in a format that was aggregate and did not allow more granular analysis. While the majority of the applicants that were denied were male, this is consistent with the larger male application total. EMSA could find no correlation that the gender of the applicant was a factor in denial. EMSA reviewed the gender data submitted on all applicants and determined the following:

- 63% of all applicants were male.
- 27% of all applicants were female.
- 10% either chose not to disclose or the gender data was not provided.
- 59% of all denials were male, 6% were female, 35% had no gender data disclosed or provided.
- 41% of all applicants who withdrew or had incomplete applications were male, 11% were female, 48% had no gender data disclosed or provided.
- 54% of all applicants approved with restrictions were male, 13% were female, 33% had no gender data disclosed or provided.

EMSA also collected demographic data for the age of all applicants. For data collected in a format that allowed analysis, EMSA examined the data and determined that age was not a denial factor. EMSA was only able to review the data of 59 certifying entities as the other data sets were in an aggregate format that prevented further analysis. Although most applicants who were denied were age 35 or younger, this is in line with the larger population of applicants as a whole. EMSA could find no evidence that the age of the applicant was a factor in denial. EMSA reviewed the age demographic data submitted on all applicants and determined the following:

- 90% of all applicants were age 35 or younger.

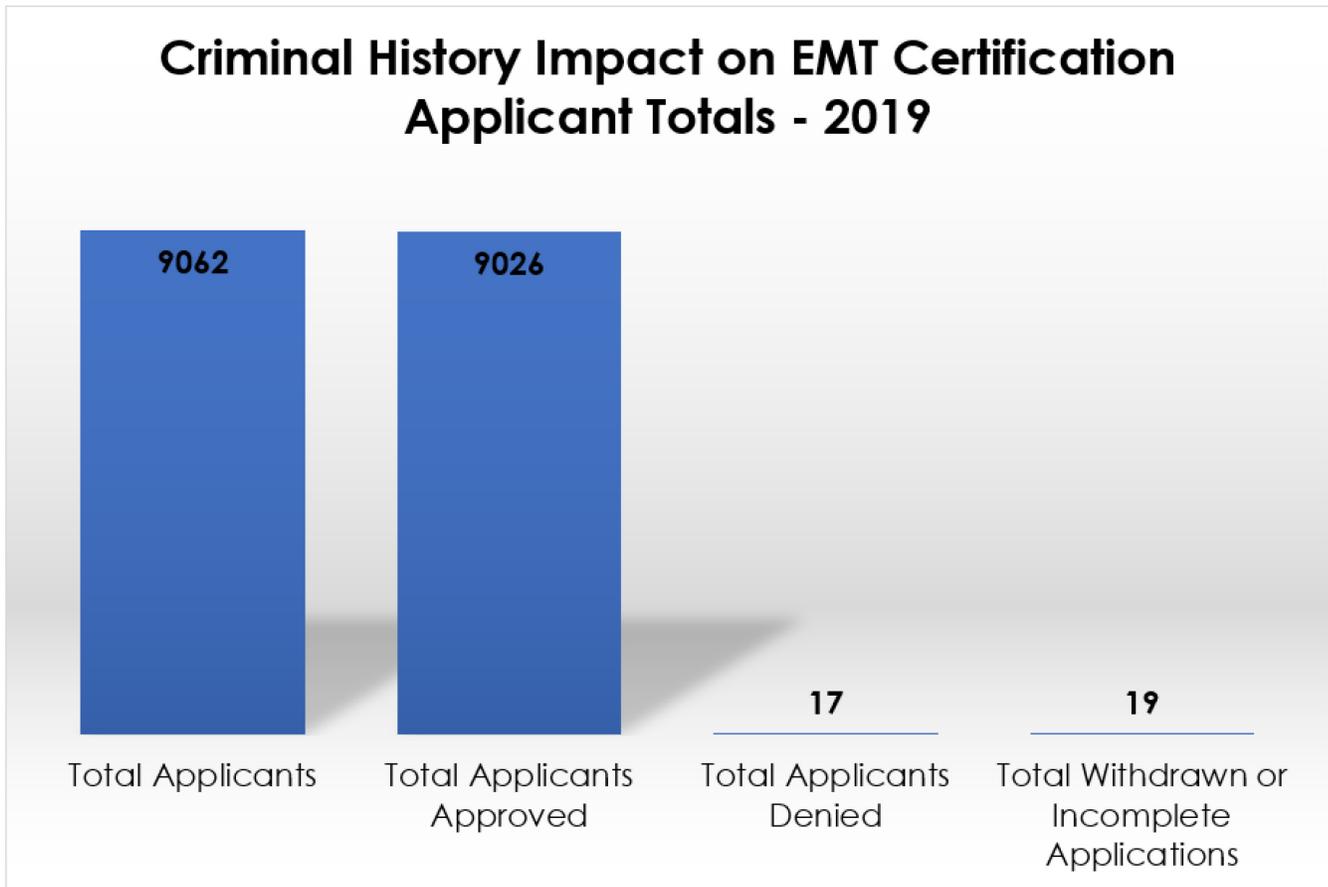
- 76% of all applicants with criminal history were age 35 or younger.
- 53% of all denials were age 35 or younger.
- 56% of all applicants who withdrew or had incomplete applications were over the age of 35.
- 66% of all applicants approved with restrictions were age 35 or younger.

Of the data submitted in a format that allowed analysis, EMSA could not determine that ethnicity or race played any denial factor. EMSA was only able to review the data of 57 certifying entities submissions for this analysis as the other data sets were either submitted in a format that was aggregate or the ethnicity data was not provided at all. Additionally, for 15 of the 17 denials reported the applicant either chose not to identify their ethnicity (ten) or the ethnicity was not specified in the data (five). EMSA could find no correlation that the ethnicity of the applicant was a factor in denial with the data provided. A review of all ethnicity data received showed the following:

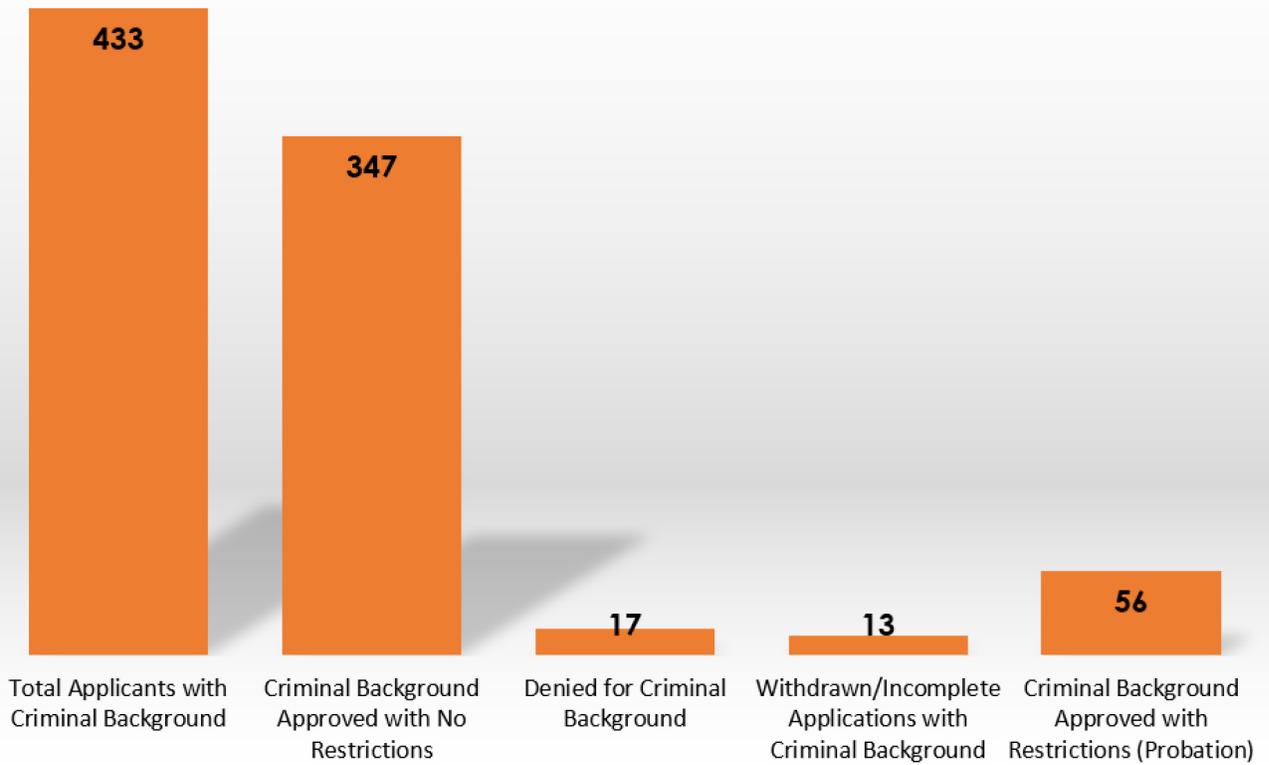
- 43% of applicants identified as was “White/Caucasian”.
- 22% of applicants identified as “Hispanic or Latino”.
- 14% of applicants chose not to identify.
- 10% of applicants identified as “Asian”.
- 5% of applicants had no ethnicity data reported in the data that was submitted.
- 3% identified as “Black/African American”.
- Other ethnicities identified in the data were; “American Indian or Alaska Native” 2% and “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander” 1%.
- 88%, or 15 of the 17 denials reported, either chose not to identify their ethnicity (ten) or the ethnicity was not specified in the data (five).
- 32% of applicants who were approved with restrictions identified as “White/Caucasian”.
- 14% of applicants who were approved with restrictions identified as “Hispanic or Latino”.

CONCLUSION:

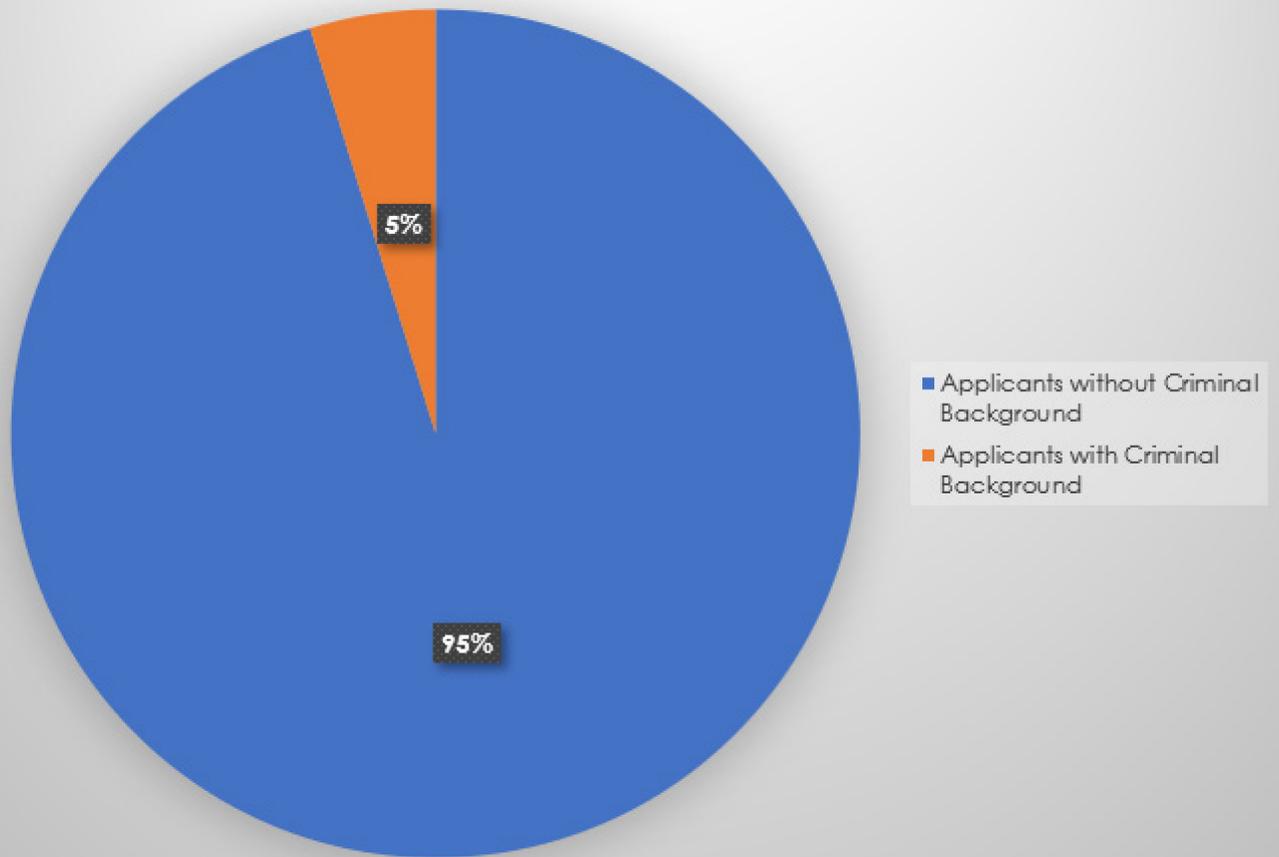
After reviewing and analyzing the EMT certification data collected from 65 certifying entities for 2019, EMSA found that prior criminal history does not appear to represent an obstacle to certification as an EMT in the state of California. The low number of EMTs denied with criminal backgrounds compared to those approved or approved with restrictions indicates that criminal history is not an absolute barrier to certification. EMSA was unable to find a correlation between gender, age and denial or approval of EMT applications. Complete analysis of demographic data was hindered by ten reports that were received and missing varying data points or were submitted in aggregate form.



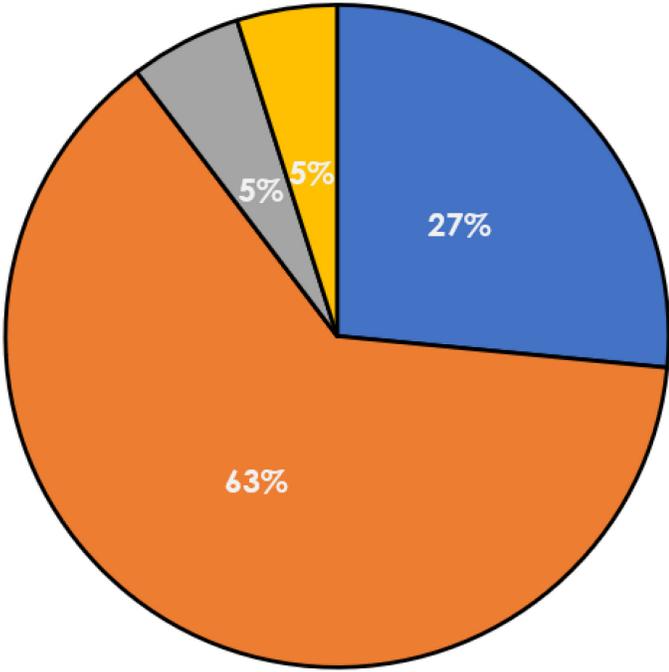
Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification Criminal Background Totals - 2019



Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification Total Applicants by Percentage - 2019

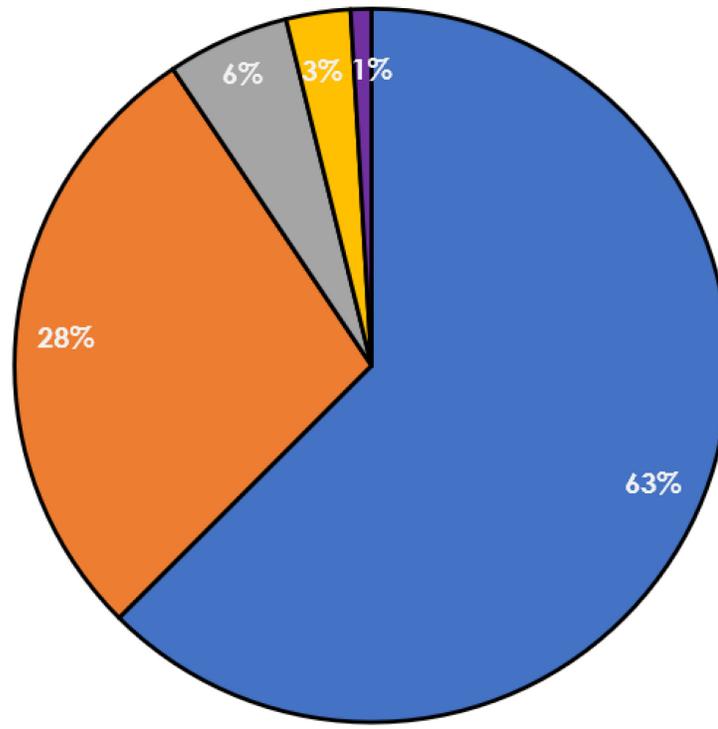


Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification Gender Applicant by Percentage -2019



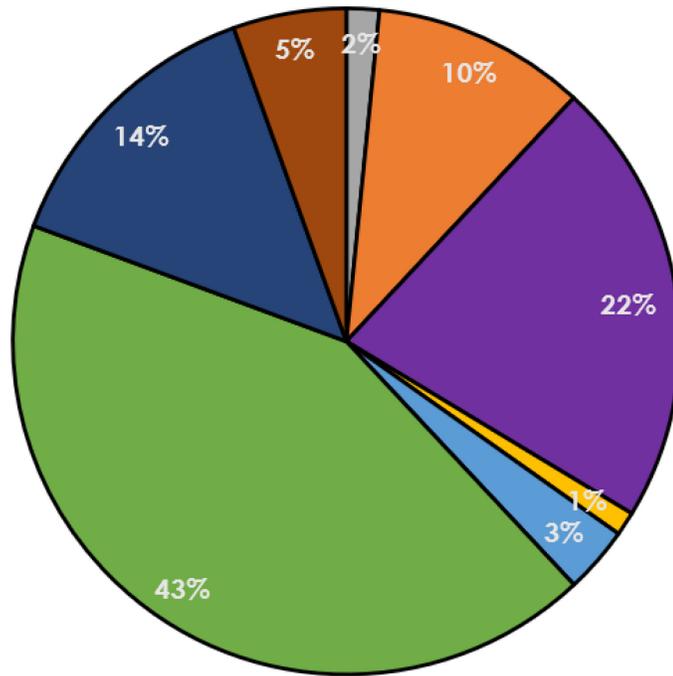
- Female Applicants
- Male Applicants
- Gender Not Disclosed (by Applicant)
- Gender Data Not Provided (by Agency)

Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification Age of Applicants by Percentage - 2019



- Age: 18-25 Applicants
- Age: 26-35 Applicants
- Age: 36-45 Applicants
- Age: 46-Older Applicants
- Age Data Not Provided (by Agency)

Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification Ethnicity Applicant by Percentage - 2019



■ American Indian or Alaska Native

■ Hispanic or Latino

■ Black/African American

■ Choose Not to Identify

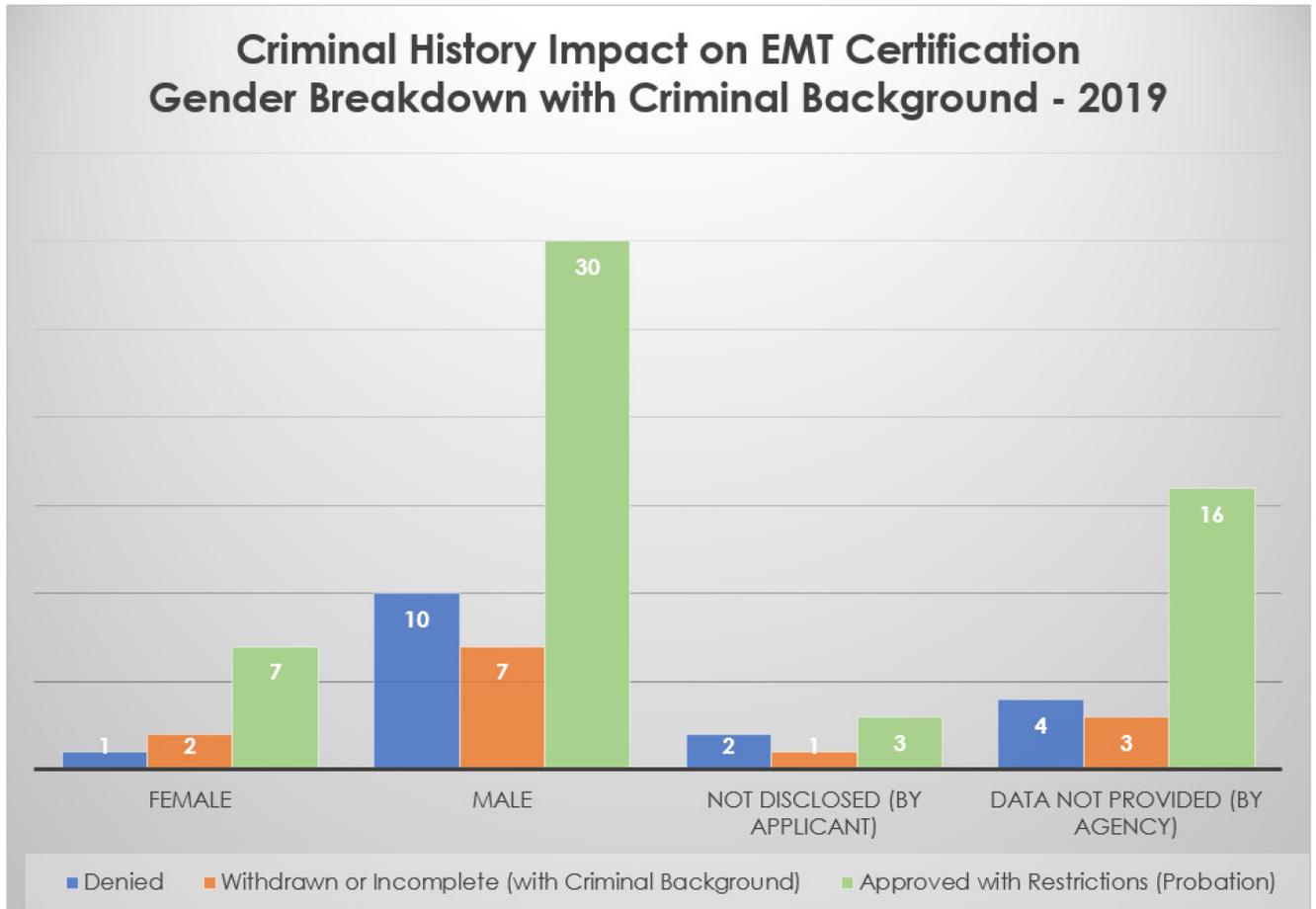
■ Asian

■ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

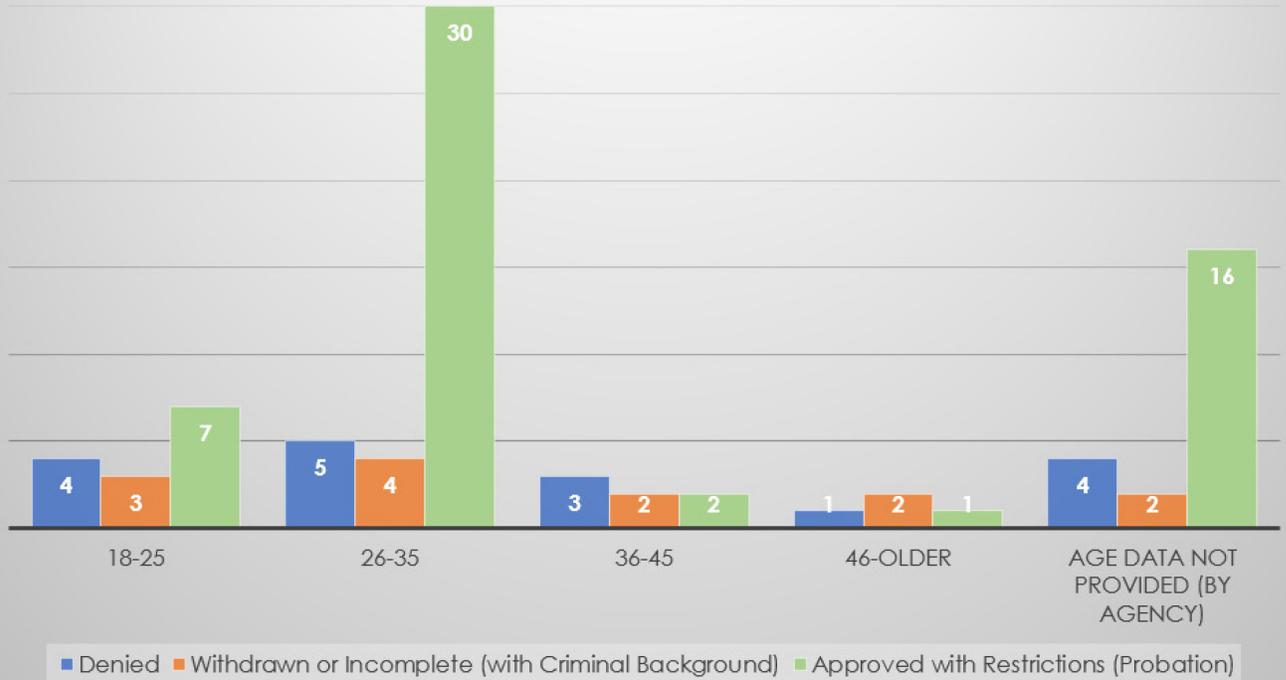
■ White/Caucasian

■ Ethnicity Data Not Provided

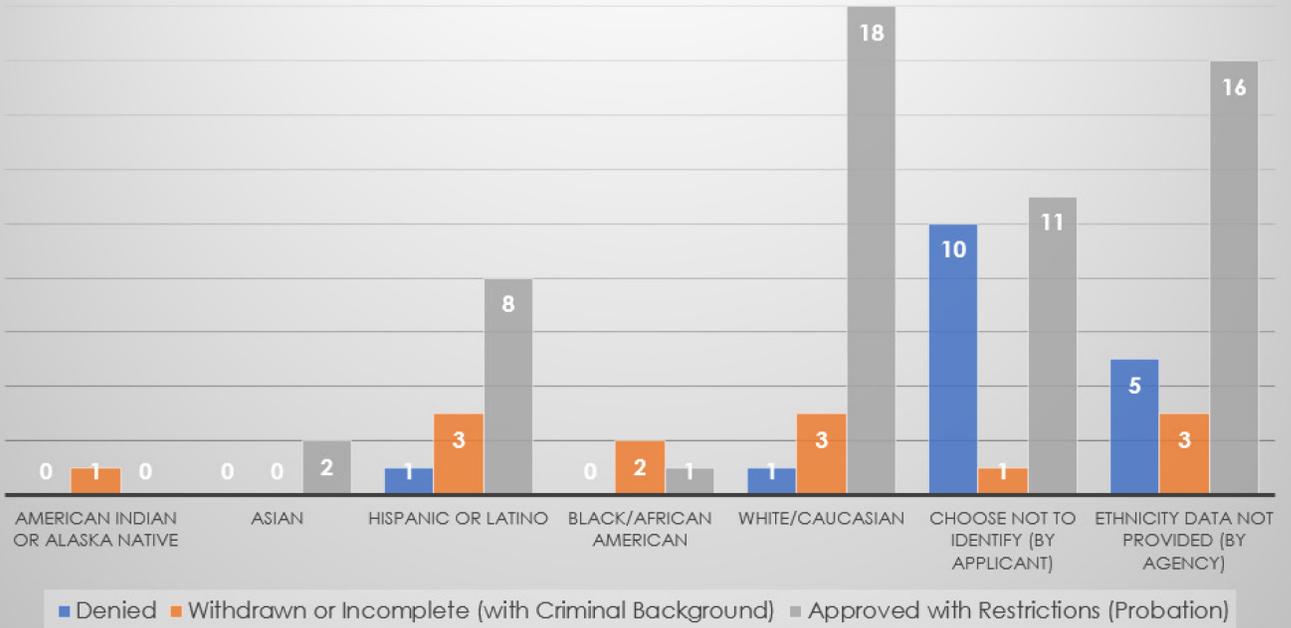
Appendix B: Graphs and Tables



Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification Age Breakdown with Criminal Background - 2019



Criminal History Impact on EMT Certification Ethnicity Breakdown with Criminal Background - 2019



(Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander not included as all results were zero)